

## Claims

[c1]

A method comprising the steps of:

ascertaining that a buyer and a seller engaging in a transaction through a computer network maintain accounts at a common monetary transfer service;

identifying the buyer and transaction details to the monetary transfer service by a data sequence which includes a character string derived from a buyer account identification by the addition of encrypting characteristics;

identifying the seller and transaction details to the monetary transfer service by a data sequence which includes a character string derived from a seller account identification by the addition of encrypting characteristics; and

effecting at the monetary transfer service a debit transaction to the buyer's account and a credit transaction to the seller's account.

[c2]

Apparatus comprising:

a buyer's station from which a buyer transmits through a computer network to a monetary transfer service a data string identifying an account maintained by the buyer with the monetary transfer service and the details of a transaction with a seller;

a first program module executing on the buyer's station which embeds in a transmitted data string a character string derived from a buyer account identification by the addition of encrypting characteristics;

a seller's station from which a seller transmits through a computer network to the monetary transfer service a data string identifying an account maintained by the seller with the monetary transfer service and the details of a transaction with the buyer;

a second program module executing on the seller's station which embeds in a transmitted data string a character string derived from a seller account identification by the addition of encrypting characteristics;

a monetary transfer service station at which transmissions from buyers and sellers are received; and

a third program module executing on the monetary transfer service station which identifies from the transmitted data strings the buyer, seller and transaction details and which effects a debit transaction to the buyer's account and a credit transaction to the seller's account.

[c3]

Apparatus comprising:

a computer readable medium; and

a program module stored on said medium accessibly to a computer system;

said program module, when executing on a computer system,

ascertaining that a user of the computer system is one of buyer and a seller engaging in a transaction through a computer network and maintaining an account at a monetary transfer service common to the other of the buyer and seller;

identifying the user and transaction details to the monetary transfer service by a data sequence which includes a character string derived from a user account identification by the addition of encrypting characteristics; and

in the event that the other of the buyer and seller transmits to the monetary transfer service data identifying the other and transaction details by a data sequence which includes a character string derived from the other's account identification by the addition of encrypting characteristics, effecting at the monetary transfer service a debit transaction to the buyer's account and a credit transaction to the seller's account.